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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8548
INFO RUDKRB/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 5670
RUFHDB/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 2451
RUDKDA/AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST 4523
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 5146
RUDKFMQ/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 220
RUFHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 357
RUFHNA/USMISSION USNATO 2101
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GENEVA FOR CD, INF, START

STOCKHOLM FOR CDE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PARM PREL INF UR BU US

SUBJECT: BURT CONSULTATIONS: MEETING WITH FIRST DEPUTY
FOREIGN MINISTER IVANOV

1. SUMMARY: IN THE ABSENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV, ASSISTANT SECRETARY BURT MET WITH FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER MARIIVANOV AT THE END OF HIS DAY OF MEETINGS INT ER FOREIGN MINISTRY FEBRUARY 23. INITIALLY IVANOV REITERATED THE SOVIET LINE ON INF DEPLOYMENTS, CHARGED THE US AAS BEHIND THE ANTONOV CASE, MADE PASSING REFERENCE TO THE KOSOVEV CASE AND COMPLAINED OF US RHETORIC A MD AT BULGARPA. ASSISTANT SECRETARY BURT RESPONDED BY EXPLAINING THE US POSITION IN INF AND DENIED IN STRONG TERMS ANY INVOLVEMENT IN THE ANTONOV CASE (ALTHOUGH WARNING THAT IF THE ITALIAN COURTS RULED THE GOB WAS INVOLVED IT WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS). HE ALSO READ TO IVANOV SOME OF THE LATTER'S OWN ANTI-AMERICAN RHETORIC. IN THE END IVANOV AGREED WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY THAT WE SHOULD SEEK WAYS TO IMPROVE OUR RELATIONS AND THAT A RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE IN GENEVA IS NEEDED. END SUMMARY.

2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY BURT MET WITH MARIIVANOV, FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ACTING FOR FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV WHO WAS OUT OF TOWN. BURT WAS

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 ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR BARRY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY PALMER, EUR/EEY DIRECTOR KUCHEL AND POLEK CHEF LAKE (NOTETAKER), DEPUTY SOREIGN MINISTER GOTSEV, YOUTH DEPARTMENT (USA) CHIEF PCHELINTSEV, DEPUTY CHIEF POPOVA AND A TRANSLATOR WERE ALSO ON THE BULGARIAN SIDE.

3. ASSISTANT SECRETARY BURT OPENED THE MEETING BY EXPRESSING HIS PLEASURE AT HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH GOTSEV AND IVANOV. HE NOTED OUR CONCERN OVER THE CURRENT STATE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS AND EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE THE USG ATTACHES TO RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT. WITH REFERENCE TO BILATERAL RELATIONS HE SAID THAT WE RECOGNIZED THERE WERE OBSTACLES, THAT WE HAVE DIFFERENT IDEAS AND DIFFERENT APPROACHES, BUT THAT BOTH SIDES HAD LEGITIMATE INTERESTS AND THAT WE CAN WORK OUT A PROCESS FOR RECONCILIATION.

4. IVANOV INITIALLY REPLIED WITH THE USUAL SOVIET LINE ON INF, PLACING THE BLAME IN THE US FOR THE BREAK IN NEGOTIATIONS. ASSISTANT SECRETARY BURT STRESSED THE HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS RAISING THE QUESTION OF WHY IT WAS ALL RIGHT TO NEGOTIATE WHILE THE SOVIET UNION DEPLOYED SS-20'S BUT NOT WHEN THE US DEPLOYED.

GENEVA FOR CD, INF, START

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BILATERAL ISSUES

5. RETURNING TO THE DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL ISSUES, ASSISTANT SECRETARY BURT NOTED THAT OUR INTERESTS IN THE RELATIONSHIP DIFFER. THE BULGARIANS ARE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT THE ECONOMIC AREA AND WE ARE INTERESTED IN HUMAN CONTACTS, ACCESS AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT WE CAN MAKE ANY MAJOR STEPS, BUT WE CAN MAKE SMALL ONES.

6. IVANOV RESPONDED THAT EACH SIDE CAN VIEW THINGS DIFFERENTLY. IN 1983 THE GOB HAD DEMONSTRATED ITS WISH AND WILL TO IMPROVE BILATERAL RELATIONS. HE CITED THE GOB'S RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH ZHIVKOV, THE TRAVEL OF BULGARIAN MINISTERS TO THE UNITED STATES AND THE FACT THAT CODEL GIBBONS WAS RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV. HE WENT ON TO SAY "VERY HONESTLY" THAT THE GOB DOES NOT FEEL THE US HAS RESPONDED. AS GOTSEV HAD EARLIER, HE CITED THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH IN LONDON, THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S SPEECH IN VIENNA AND THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS ABOUT BULGARIA AND TERRORISM. HE SAID THREE SENIOR OFFICIALS ATTACKING BULGARIA HARDLY REPRESENTED AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS.

7. HE SAID THAT CERTAIN "ORGANIZATION AND CIRCLES" IN THE US HAD PLAYED A ROLE IN THE ANTONOV CASE--CITING THE STERLING AND HENZE BOOKS AS PART OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST BULGARIA. HE MENTIONED THE KOSTADINOV CASE, BUT PASSED IT OFF QUICKLY NOTING THAT IT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN DETAIL THE DAY BEFORE. HE CONCLUDED THAT HE HAD BEEN OPEN AND BLUNT BELIEVING THAT THIS WAS THE BEST WAY TO DEVELOP BETTER UNDERSTANDING.

8. ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE TO BE BLUNT, ASSISTANT SECRETARY BURT DENIED THAT THE US WAS INVOLVED IN THE ANTONOV CASE. HE SAID THAT THIS WAS A PROBLEM BETWEEN BULGARIA AND A THIRD COUNTRY. HE ADDED THAT WHILE WE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ULTIMATE OUTCOME OF THE ANTONOV CASE, IF BULGARIA IS INVOLVED, IT WILL

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HAVE AN IMPROTANT IMPACT ON OUR RELATIONSHIP.

9. WITH REFERENCE TO BULGARIAN COMPLAINTS ABOUT AMERICAN RHETORIC, BURT READ FROM IVANOV'S RECENT ARTICLE IN WHICH HE ATTACKED THE UNITED STATES. CITING IVANOV'S STATEMENT THAT THE PRESIDENT IS LEADING THE WORLD TO THE BRINK OF NUCLEAR WAR, HE SAID THIS WAS THE WORST KIND OF SLANDER. HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT THE US WAS ATTEMPTING TO LOWER THE LEVEL OF RHETORIC.

10. ALTHOUGH IVANOV WENT ON TO REPEAT HIS BELIEF THAT THE US IS INVOLVED IN THE ANTONOV CASE AND TO RAISE AGAIN THE BULGARIAN CONCERN ABOUT THE INF DEPLOYMENT, IN THE END HE AGREED WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. MR. BURT CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT THE SOVIETS RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE WITHOUT PRE-CONDITIONS, NOTING THAT IT WOULD BE AN ACT OF POLITICAL COURAGE.

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END OF MESSAGE

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